

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 19117 071450Z

45

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DPW-01 DRC-01 NIC-01 /153 W

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P R 071135Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8797

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

UNCLAS SAIGON 19117

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS; MILI;VS

SUBJECT: GVN ANNOUNCES RETALIATORY BOMBING OF LOC NINH, BO DUC;

PRG, DRV TO BOYCOTT NOV 8 FPJMT SESSION

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. AT THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED GVN PRESS CONFERENCE PM NOVEMBER 7,
GVN PRESS SPOKESMAN IN RESPONSE FOA QUESTION MADE THE FOLLOWING
ANNOUNCEMENT:

QUOTE: THIS MORNING RVN AIRCRAFT HAVE CONDUCTED A NUMBER OF
TACTICAL AIR STRIKES AGAINST COMMUNIST MILITARY INSTALLATIONS
AND SUPPLY DEPOSITS IN THE AREA FROM ONE TO TWO KILOMETERS FROM
LOC NINH, IN BINH LONG PROVINCE, AND IN THE AREA OF BO DUC IN
PHUOC LONG PROVINCE, AND THESE AIRSTRIKES ARE A PUNITIVE ACTION
AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS' RECENT ATTACKS, ESPECIALLY THE ENEMY ATTACK
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PAGE 02 SAIGON 19117 071450Z

ON BIEN HOA AIRBASE. END QUOTE

2. THE GVN SPOKESMAN REFUSED TO COMMENT ON ESTIMATED DAMAGE INFLICTED ON COMMUNIST INSTALLATIONS OR WHETHER AAA FIRE HAD BEEN ENCOUNTERED. HE SAID " MORE THAN FIFTY" SORTIES HAD BEEN FLOWN AND CLAIMED THAT "ALL RETURNED SAFELY." HE REFUSED TO SAY FROM WHICH VNAF BASES THE RETALIATORY AIRSTRIKES HAD BEEN MOUNTED. THE VNAF INVOLVED WERE SKYRAIDERS, F-5'S, AND A-37'S.

3. THE SPOKESMAN WAS ASKED IF THIS MOVE ESTABLISHES A PATTERN OF GVN RETALIATORY RESPONSE. HE REPLIED THAT AIR STRIKES ARE NOT THE ONLY RECOURSE; IF NEED BE, THE GVN WOULD EMPLOY GROUND FORCES. IF THE COMMUNISTS STOP VIOLATING THE CEASEFIRE, HE CONTINUED, THE GVN WILL STOP RETALIATING. HOWEVER, "IF THEY ATTACK US ONCE, WE WILL ATTACK THEM 10 TIMES."

4. A NEWSMAN ASKED WHETHER RVNAF COMMANDERS HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO LAUNCH RETALIATORY ACTIONS THEMSELVES, OR IS "A POLITICAL DECISION" REQUIRED FIRST? THE RESPONSE NOTED THAT PRESIDENT THIEU IS BOTH RVNAF SUPREME COMMANDER AND PRESIDENT. PRESSED ON WHETHER THE PRESIDENT HAD PERSONNALLY AUTHORIZED THESE STRIKES, THE SPOKESMAN DECLINED TO SAY SO SPECIFICALLY BUT EMPHASIZED THAT ALL ACTIONS BY RVNAF ARE CONDUCTED ON PROPER ORDERS ISSUED THROUGH CHANNELS BY AUTHORIZED SUPERIORS.

5. ANOTHER QUESTIONER WAS INTERESTED IN HOW THESE PARTICULAR TARGETS HAD BEEN SELECTED, AND IF THESE WERE OTHER TARGETS IN SVN WHICH MIGHT MERIT SUCH ATTENTION. THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT TARGETS MUST BE SELECTED ON THE BASIS OF NUMEROUS FACTORS, INCLUDING WEATHER, ETC. LOC NINH AND BO DUC WERE "WORTHY" OF THE NUMBER OF SORTIES LAUNCHED. REMINDING HIS AUDIENCE OF THE SIZE OF THE NVA FORCES IN SVN, THE SPOKESMAN SAID "IT IS CERTAIN THERE ARE OTHER SUCH TARGETS."

6. AN ABC CORRESPONDENT PRESSED FOR A COMMENT WHETHER LOC NINH HAD BEEN BOMBED BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN MENTIONED AS THE "PRG CAPITAL." THE SPOKESMAN REPLIED THAT THE COMMUNISTS SOMETIMES RECEIVE FOREIGN VISITORS IN QUANG TRI AND THAT AREA HAS ALSO BEEN CALLED THE "PRG CAPITAL." HE SAID "WE DON'T KNOW WHERE IS IS."

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 19117 071450Z

7. THE QUESTION WAS ASKED WHETHER THE GVN IN ANNOUNCING THESE RETALIATORY STRIKES WAS ADMITTING THAT IT HAD COMMITTED A CEASEFIRE VIOLATION. "NO, WE DO NOT THINK THESE ARE CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS," THE SPOKESMAN RESPONDED. "(THE STRIKES) ARE ONLY TO PUNISH THE ENEMY WHO DOES COMMIT VIOLATIONS. WE ALWAYS TRY TO SERIOUSLY IMPLEMENT THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT." THE SPOKESMAN ALSO NOTED THAT THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME

THE GVN HAS OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED RETALIATORY AIRSTRIKES,
REFERRING TO BOMBING OF COMMUNIST TARGETS IN RESPONSE TO THE ENEMY
OFFENSIVE ACTION AT LE MINH AND KHIEM HAN.

8. THE GVN SPOKESMAN WAS ALSO ASKED, "IS THERE A CEASEFIRE IN
SVN? HE REPLIED THAT THE DAILY GVN COMMUNIQUE WHICH LIST COMMUNIST
VIOLATIONS SHOULD PROVIDE A SUFFICIENT ANSWER TO THE QUESTION.

9. WE UNDERSTAND THAT BOTH THE PRG AND THE DRV FPJMT DELEGATIONS
HAVE ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WILL BOYCOTT TOMORROW'S REGULARLY
SCHEDULED FPJMT MEETING BECAUSE OF THE GVN AIRSTRIKES.
APPLING

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